

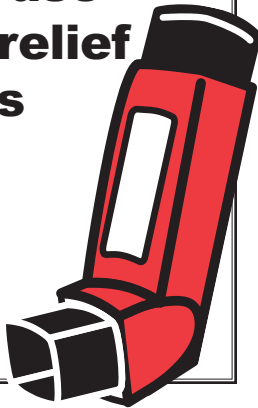


Watch  
for  
symptoms.

**Be alert for symptoms  
of an asthma attack!**

- **Coughing**
- **Wheezing**
- **Chest tightness**
- **Difficulty breathing**

**If you have these  
symptoms, use  
your quick-relief  
medicine as  
directed  
by your  
doctor.**



Adapted from: National Heart Lung and  
Blood Institute Diseases and Conditions  
Index: Asthma. Available at  
[http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/  
dci/Diseases/Asthma/Asthma\\_All.html](http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/dci/Diseases/Asthma/Asthma_All.html)

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# COMPLETE WELLNESS:

## *A Guide to Managing Your Health*



**Asthma Series R8, Part 2  
January 2008**

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Taking care of your asthma is an  
important part of your life. Controlling  
your asthma means working closely with  
your doctor, pharmacist, and nurse to  
learn how to prevent an asthma attack  
and what to do if one occurs. By  
controlling your asthma every day, you  
can prevent serious symptoms and do all  
of the activities you want to do.

If you are a Medicaid recipient with asthma,  
you may be qualified for a free asthma  
program. The program is called *Asthma*  
HELP (*Health Education by Louisiana*  
*Pharmacists*). *Asthma* HELP will teach you  
about your asthma and how to control it. If  
you would like to know more about this  
program, call 1-866-762-2404 and ask to  
speak to an *Asthma* HELP pharmacist.

**Ask your doctor,  
pharmacist, or nurse about the  
information contained in this  
brochure.**

## Do you know what brings on your asthma symptoms?

You need to know what brings on your asthma symptoms. Things that bring on asthma symptoms are called “triggers.” Here is a list of some things that may “trigger” your asthma:



**Animal Dander:** If animal dander is a problem for you, keep your pet outdoors, or at least out of your bedroom.



**Smoke:** Do not smoke or allow smoking in your house.



**Pollen:** If pollen triggers your asthma, try to stay inside as much as possible when the pollen count is high. If you go outside, try wearing a filtering mask to cover your mouth and nose.



**Dust Mites:** To control dust mites, wash your sheets, blankets, pillows, and stuffed toys once a week. Use hot water to wash them. You can even get special covers for your mattress and pillows. Putting items in the freezer overnight can also kill dust mites.



**Cold Air:** If cold air bothers you, wear a scarf over your mouth and nose in the winter.

## Take control of your asthma!

Here is a list of some things that you may notice when your asthma is getting worse. **Don't ignore these warning signs!**

**You have** asthma symptoms more often than usual.

**Your asthma** symptoms are worse than they used to be.

**Your asthma** symptoms are bothering you a lot at night and keeping you from sleeping.

**You are** missing school or work, or you cannot participate in your daily activities because of your asthma.

If your asthma seems to be getting worse, see your doctor. You may need to change your medicine or do other things to keep your asthma under control.

**Your asthma** medicines do not seem to be working very well anymore.

**You have** to use your short-acting quick-relief (“rescue”) inhaler more often. Using quick-relief medicine every day or using more than one inhaler a month is too much.

**You have** to go to the emergency room or doctor because of an asthma attack. You end up in the hospital because of your asthma.

## How well are your lungs working?

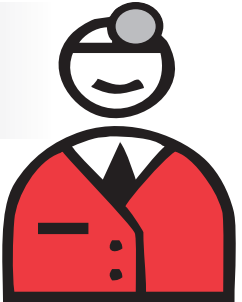
Many people with asthma monitor their asthma with a peak flow meter. This hand-held device measures how well your lungs work. A peak flow meter can help you detect early changes in your asthma. Using one can even warn you of a possible attack, even before you feel symptoms.

Ask your doctor how using a peak flow meter could help you control your asthma. If you do not have a peak flow meter, talk to your doctor about getting one.



Ask your doctor how a peak flow meter can help you control your asthma!

## Talk to your doctor.



If you have asthma, it is important to learn how to take care of yourself. Your doctor can help.

The two of you can develop an asthma action plan that you are both happy with.

**Tell your doctor** about all the medicines you are taking. Some medicines may make your asthma worse.

**Make sure** you use your medicine correctly. Show your doctor or pharmacist how you use your inhaler. Ask them if the way you use it is correct. This is very important. If you don't use your inhaler right, you may not get enough medicine into your lungs.

**If you have problems** taking your asthma medicine, let your doctor know right away.

**Follow your asthma** action plan and have regular checkups. **If you don't have an action plan, then ask your doctor about helping you make one.**

Educational material provided to Louisiana Medicaid recipients and providers by the Louisiana Medicaid Pharmacy Benefits Management Program (PBM) in the Department of Health and Hospitals and developed by the University of Louisiana at Monroe College of Pharmacy.